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and More!**

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A dramatic episode in the forest in **THE BANDIT PRINCE**.

THE MOMENTOUS MEETING: Between the Master and the future Vivekananda—in **STORY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA**.

A bunch of choice tales—witty and amusing—and all the regular features, along with **Window on the World** and the General Knowledge Supplement.

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Controlling Editor:
NAGI REDDI

Founder:
CHAKRAPANI



FORTY-THREE YEARS OF FREEDOM

Everybody knows that India has a great heritage—a great past. Let us not speak of that, but of present India. What does India lack? Scientific talent? No. Our young scientists are doing fine abroad as well as in India wherever they have the opportunity to prove their talent.

Do we lack natural resources? No. India is one of the richest countries in the world so far as natural resources are concerned. We have an excellent constitution which ensures equal rights for all the citizens. We also have a vigilant press.

But it is well-known that all is not well with India. Our progress during the last forty-three years after freedom is not satisfactory. There is no discipline in the country. There is much violence on demands which are basically wrong. Where have we failed?

We have failed in curbing our ego. We are miserable victims of individual ego, caste ego, communal ego, professional ego, so on and so forth. We are insincere. We not only deceive others, but also deceive ourselves. On the auspicious 15th of August, let us direct a searchlight into our own hearts.



EVENTS IN SRI LANKA

According to *Mahavamsa*, the ancient historical records of Sri Lanka, an Indian Prince, Vijaya Simha, exiled by his father, reached Sri Lanka with seven hundred followers. He befriended a tribal princess and with her help, founded a new kingdom. Then he disowned the tribal girl and married a princess from Madurai. His followers too



married Tamil girls brought from Madurai. Their descendants are the present Ceylonese. The island got its name Simhala from Vijay Simha. Of course, it was known as Lanka earlier to that, as we know from the great epic, *Ramayana*.

Later, over the centuries, thousands of people from Tamil Nadu migrated to Sri Lanka, because only twenty miles of sea lay between the two shores. In the eleventh century, the Chola kings ruled Sri Lanka for about eighty years. In the 19th century many more Tamils went to live in Sri Lanka as tea plantation workers.

There are marked cultural and religious differences among the different Tamil communities in Sri Lanka. But for a long time the Tamils living in Jaffna region have felt that they do not receive the treatment due to them. The Ceylonese have always enjoyed greater government patronage. The grievance of the Tamils, in recent times, broke out as rebellions. Several militant groups were out to demand an independent country for them. But the world opinion did not support

the division of Sri Lanka. At the intervention of India, it was decided to give the Tamil area a separate identity, with a local government elected by the people. There is no doubt that most of the Tamils were happy with this solution. Under the supervision of the Indian Peace Keeping Force, they participated in the Elections in an impressive way. A provincial government was established. But one militant group, LTTE, was so eager to grab power that it continued to create problems. It would kill anybody who dared to differ from its leadership. It mercilessly massacres its opponents even on the soil of India. India is the true friend of Tamils, but of all the Tamils, not of one single group which, by hook or by crook, wants to take charge of the destiny of the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

After the Indian Peace Keeping Force left Sri Lanka at the insistence of both the new government of the island and the LTTE, the clash between the two has become bloody and barbaric. The peace-loving people are the sufferers.

HE WHO HATED FLATTERY

Two young men, Kumar and Shekhar, completed their education in the village. Both decided to proceed to the town to seek jobs.

Before leaving the village they went to meet the different senior villagers and seek their blessings. Everybody they met gave them some good, sensible advice. However, when they met a retired officer of the king, he said, "Look here, boys, nothing works like flattery!" And he taught them ten stock flatteries.

It so happened that between the two young men Kumar was too poor to hire a carriage to the town or share it with Shekhar. On the auspicious day he left his house early in the morning, ready to walk the distance. In the village square he saw Shekhar waiting for a carriage.

"Kumar! How did you like the officer's advice?" asked Shekhar.

"They may be helpful," said Kumar. "Though the officer spoke in a lighter vein. He did not tell us to take them seriously," Kumar added.

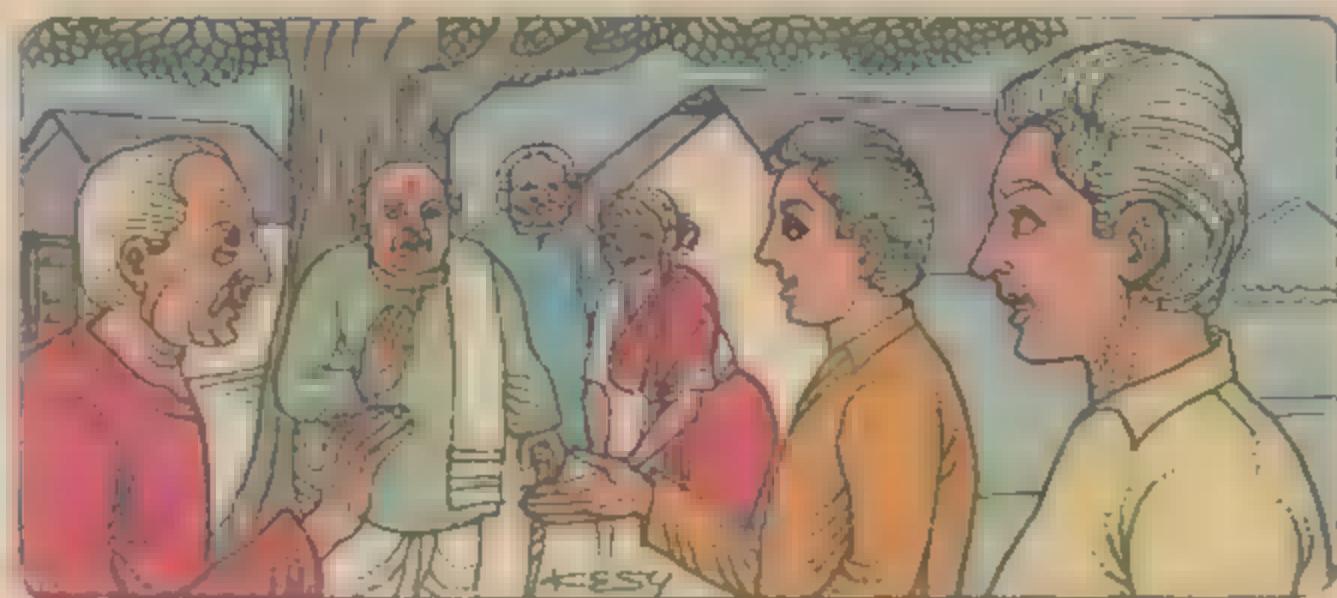
"I did not like them. Flattery! Pooh!" commented Shekhar. His carriage had arrived. He stepped in. The carriage was about to start when Kumar said, "Shekhar! You are the only person I have known who hates flattery, who pooh poohs at it! I am delighted."

Shekhar smiled, nodded and said, "By the way, Kumar, why should you walk all the way? Come in. After all, I am paying for the full carriage!"

Kumar took a seat facing Shekhar. The carriage moved on.

"Why are you smiling?" Shekhar asked.

"I think, there is truth in what the retired officer said. Atleast I have got the proof of it by applying one of the ten stock flatteries he taught us the other day!"





THE SECOND

THE BANDIT

All the people in the city of Vasuli were scared. A bandit had arrived amidst them. He was not only daring, but also extremely crafty. He had two lieutenants. He entered the house of a jeweller and threatened him with death unless he handed over to him all the jewellery he had. The jeweller did as demanded.

The merchant reported the matter to the king. All the other jewellers in the city became cautious. They fortified their shops and houses and appointed trained watchmen. Some of them maintained dogs.

The bandit struck the house of a gentleman who was a minor officer in the king's court. To his great surprise and happiness, the bandit found more wealth in his house than he had found in the

jeweller's house.

The bandit had a spy in the king's court. The bandit got reports of every discussion that concerned him. He was surprised that the officer did not report the theft to the king.

The bandit had hoped to receive similar amounts of wealth in the households of other officers. Accordingly he raided the houses of three other officers one after another, but what he got was far less than expected. He was disappointed.

After a month he invaded the house of the first officer. Again he got quite a good amount of wealth. This time also the matter was not reported to the king.

One day he suddenly entered an inn and tried to plunder the wealth of a merchant who was

staying there. He was so confident of his ability that he had gone all alone. Of his two lieutenants one was ill and the other one was attending upon him.

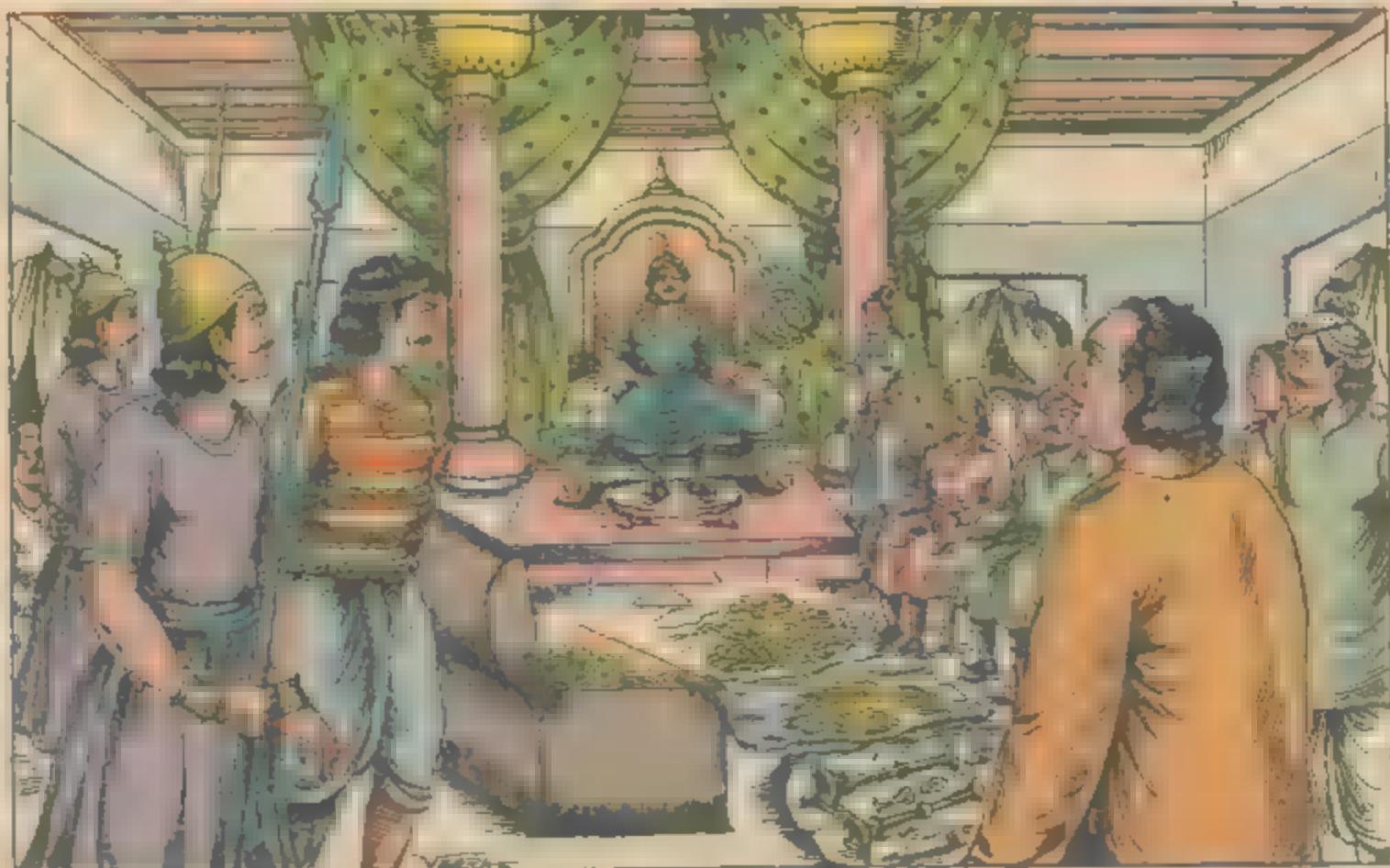
But the man who lived in the inn declaring himself as a merchant was none other than the police chief in disguise. The two men who posed as his servants were two of the ablest policemen who knew many tricks of capturing and controlling rowdies. They pounced upon the bandit and tied his hands and shackled his feet. He was carried to the king's court.

The king was delighted. He told the bandit, "Die you must.

But you may die without disclosing where you have kept your booty, or you may die after disclosing them. The choice is yours."

The bandit stood thoughtful for a moment and then said, "Since die I must, let me at least restore the plundered wealth to their owners. Otherwise they would lie hidden forever."

Following his directions, the king's officials found the hidden booty and brought them to the court. All the officers and the merchant whose house had been plundered were informed. They came and, in the bandit's presence, recovered their lost wealth.





But the greater part of the booty still lay unclaimed. "What is this? Where did you get them? Why is nobody coming to claim them?" asked the astonished king.

"My lord, I got this from the house of one of your officers," said the bandit.

"Who among my officers was so rich?" asked the king.

"He lives in a yellow house at the eastern end of the city, near the lake," replied the bandit.

The king found out who lived there. Inquiry proved that the officer was a corrupt fellow who had exploited hundreds of people because he was in a key

position. He did not report the raid on his house by the bandit lest the king should ask him how he had got so much wealth.

The officer was dismissed and jailed. The king told the bandit, "What reward do you expect for exposing the other bandit—the corrupt officer?"

"My lord, I expect your pardon," said the bandit.

The king allowed the bandit and his two lieutenants to live as labourers in the royal orchard. In due course the king was satisfied that they had given up their old habit and were really living as honest human beings.

Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value.

—Albert Einstein

There was a king who knew a philosopher. One day, while the king, riding his horse, was out on the streets, he saw the philosopher walking slowly.

"Hello, gentleman, where are you going?" the king asked.

"I don't know," replied the philosopher.

The answer annoyed the king. "Don't be so insolent. You should answer my question in a matter-of-fact manner. Let me put the question once again. What is your destination?"

"I don't know!" was the philosopher's reply.

The infuriated king looked at his bodyguards and asked them to throw the philosopher into jail. His order was carried out.

However, by evening the king had started feeling uneasy for his action. He went to meet the philosopher in his cell in the prison and asked him, "Why did you not speak the truth?"

"My lord, don't you realise even now that I spoke nothing but the truth? I was enjoying a stroll absentmindedly. Did I dream that my destination would be the prison?"

The king knew the truth and apologised to the philosopher.



LEAVES FROM THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

THE LOST ANGEL

The great artist, thinker and one of the greatest geniuses of all time, Leonardo da Vinci, has left behind him the immortal painting "Last Supper". A legend goes to say that he chose an angel-faced young man to serve as his model for the figure of Christ. The young man gave him several sittings.

Twenty-five years later the artist decided to paint the face of Satan in hell. He looked for a model for a long time. At last he found a criminal, accused of several murders and brutality of other kinds, being led to jail. With the permission of the authority, he made him sit as the model for his new project. The model had a fearful face.

As he would give the finishing touch to his painting, he was surprised to see tears drizzling in the model's eyes. "What's the matter?" the artist asked. "Don't you recognise me? Years ago, I served as your model for Jesus!"

The artist stood speechless. His company, bad thoughts and bad deeds had so totally altered the traits of the man!



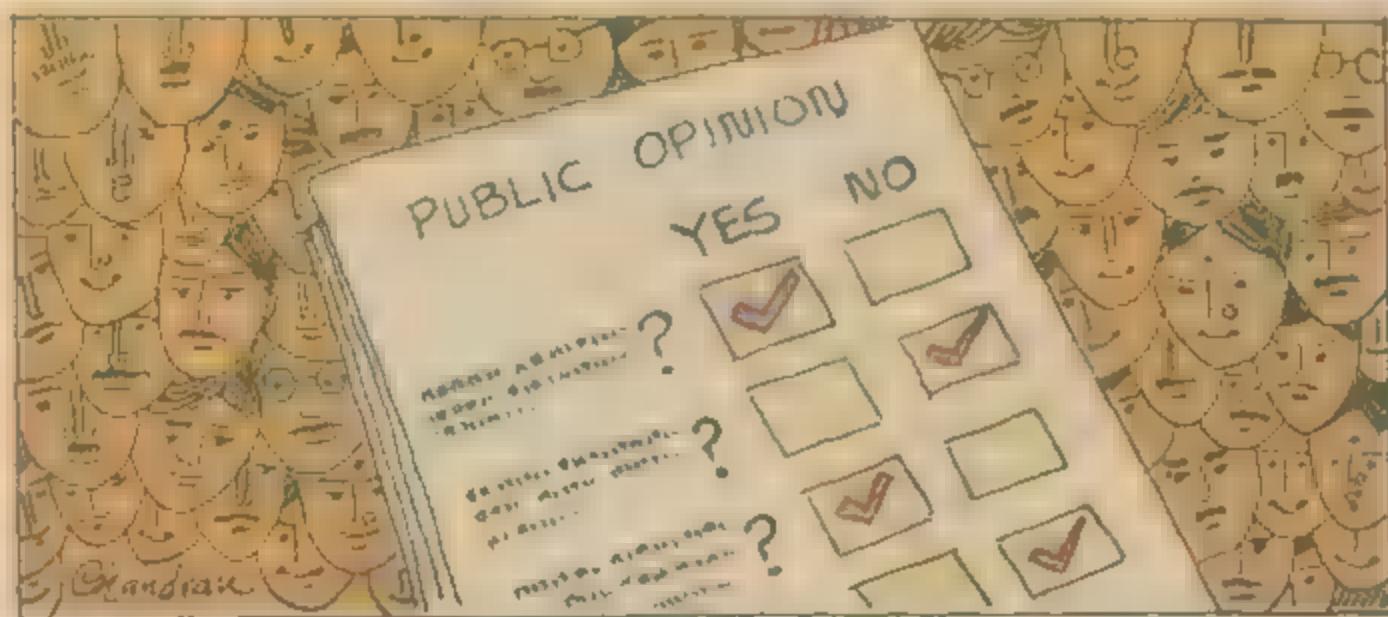
OFFICES AND POLLING

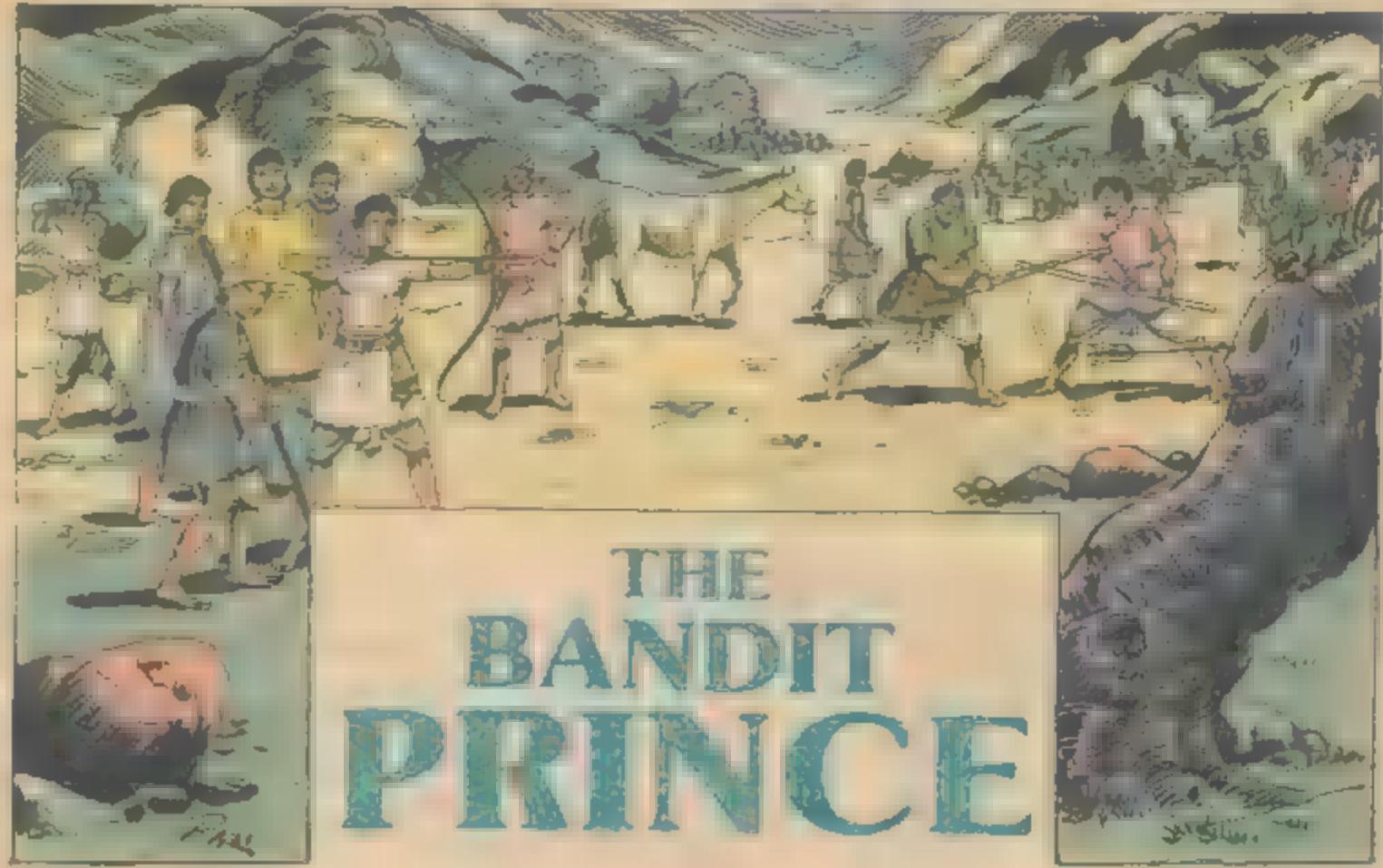
Rashmi Malhotra of New Delhi wonders what gallops have to do with poll! Nothing, except that sometimes some people's imagination run in gallops to predict the outcome of a poll:

In fact, Rashmi is confusing gallop with Gallup. The phrase *Gallup Poll* comes from the name of Mr. George Gallup of Britain. He innovated a way to ascertain public opinion on a certain issue, by putting questions to ■■■■■ people who represent the different sections of the population. Those who go to conduct this sample survey must be trained interviewers. The people chosen to answer questions must truly represent different sections of the population—and hence must be very carefully chosen. If all these conditions are honestly observed, the result of the *Gallup Poll* can be reasonably correct. But sometimes the device is used to influence public opinion in favour of or against an issue.

The *Gallup Poll* is often conducted before Elections in ■ democracy, by reputed newspapers or institutions specialising in opinion survey.

"What is the origin of *bunkum*?" asks Ravikanthan of Mysore. The word means nothing more than claptrap or flowery, long speech, meant for getting publicity rather than serving any purpose. Its origin is from Buncombe, a constituency in North Carolina, U.S.A. The honourable Member who represented it one day delivered ■ long, bombastic speech in the Senate. When a friend asked him why he went on with that exercise when most of the members either left the hall or yawned and dozed, he said, "I was talking to my constituency, Buncombe, and not to the Senators!"





THE BANDIT PRINCE

(While Vir Singh grows more and more tyrannical, there is resistance to his tyranny by a group of young men under Vasant's leadership. Meanwhile the fugitive king, Shanti Dev, has come to know that his son is alive and well).

ime rolled on. Vir Singh's dream of raising a powerful army to invade other kingdoms, particularly Amritpur, remained a dream. The people resisted his policy of exploitation. The group of young men organised under Vasant's leadership became more powerful. Again and again they swooped down upon Vir Singh's

soldiers—when the soldiers were found harassing the innocent people. In the fights that followed, the soldiers were the losers.

Vir Singh and his general, Kapalchand, tried their best to locate the hideout of the rebels, but they failed. In fact, the rebels camped at different places in the

THE MOMENTOUS CONFRONTATION



vast forest. However, their headquarters was a small valley surrounded by hills. Although we call it a valley, it was a mountain pass, only quite broad in the middle, with several sweet, cool springs falling into it. There were strong reasons for the rebels choosing this place. First of all, this was hidden from the sight of the people who were outside the ring of hills. Secondly there were caves and natural tunnels into which the rebels could disappear whenever necessary.

The rebels gathered in the valley once a week and planned their activities. They also practised archery, fencing and lathi-

play in the valley. Some of the soldiers of Vir Singh who had taken shelter in Amritpur were brought to the valley to train the rebels in different military arts.

Things were neither smooth nor easy for the young men. The king of Amritpur was most willing to take care of all their needs, but Vasant would accept only the minimum help from him. He would like his followers to work hard and raise crops in the forest and gather fruits and roots and feed themselves. They moved about in the kingdom of Sumedh and its capital Shantipur individually, as mendicants or petty traders or pilgrims. If one of them saw that Vir Singh's men were planning to loot some villagers, he would rush back into the forest and inform Vasant. Then they planned their operation. They came in small groups through different routes and met at an appointed place. Then they went to confront Vir Singh's soldiers.

Eight more years passed in this way—reducing the people of Sumedh to a state of acute misery.

Vir Singh's men knew that the rebels roamed in disguise. The soldiers suspected every innocent

traveller or mendicant.

One afternoon Vasant, disguised as a bearded holy man, sat in front of the headquarters of Kapalchand. Nobody suspected that a rebel leader would dare to come to the army camp. The soldiers took Vasant to be a real mendicant.

"Holy man, do you know the art of palm-reading?" a captain asked Vasant, in a lighter mood.

"I know," replied Vasant.

"Will you then come into my room and read my palm?" asked the captain, growing curious.

Vasant was too willing to do so, for that would bring him into closer touch with the captain. He might be able to gather some intelligence about their future plans.

But something unexpected happened. As he stood up, the false locks of hair on his head got stuck to a hook hanging from the roof. And when he walked, the wig got detached from his head.

"What is this? Are you not a real mendicant? Who are you then?" demanded the captain.

Vasant knew that it would be impossible to bluff them about his identity. He started running at once.

"Catch the fellow, catch the



spy!" shouted the captain as he gave him a hot chase. Two or three soldiers joined the captain. There was no time for them to go to the stable and get horses and join the race. And without a horse, it was not easy to outdo Vasant in running. But it so happened that the captain was the best runner in Vir Singh's army. He was quite a match for Vasant. Panting and gasping for breath, he was about to catch up with Vasant when he saw a rider coming their way from the opposite direction.

"Hello rider, catch this fellow running in front of me. He is a spy of the rebels. You will be



rewarded!" shouted the captain. He took it for granted that the rider was an officer of the court or a wealthy nobleman who was obliged to support Vir Singh.

But the rider did something puzzling. "Run faster and cross the river!" he told Vasant. Then, rushing upon the captain, he brought his whip down on him. "I am sorry," he said. "But I must stop you from catching the rebel!"

The captain fell down. The two soldiers who had caught up with him sat down to look into his condition. The rider turned his horse and sped up. His horse leaped over the narrow river like

a flash of lightning.

As soon as Vasant reached the other shore of the river Nandini by swimming, the rider lent him a hand and helped him climb up the bank. The veil from the rider's face had fallen off. Vasant looked at him and instantly knelt down before him. "My lord," he stammered out, "for a long time I had suspected that the mysterious hero who came to our rescue again and again was none other than our noble king. How lucky I am that today I was not only saved by you, but also I recognised you!"

He bowed down to King Shanti Dev.

"Vasant, I appreciate your courage and feeling for the unfortunate people of Sumedh. But do not reveal the fact that I — alive," said the king.

"Why not, my lord?"

"First, the people would be agitated, secondly, Vir Singh would begin a witch-hunt to find me. Thousands of innocent people would be harassed," said the king.

"But, my lord, is it not time for at least our patriotic young fighters to know that you are alive? Think of the enthusiasm the news would create in them.

What could be more thrilling, more inspiring than to fight for you? I beseech you to change your mind. Be pleased to appear before the youths, at least once. You must become the rallying point for all of us. How long should we play hide-and-seek with Vir Singh's army? That is not likely to improve the situation. Year by year the suffering of the people is increasing. We must cry a halt to it. We must dethrone the tyrant," said Vasant in a tone charged with emotion.

The king thought for a moment. "I think you are right. We must mobilise our own people and, with the help of the army of Amritpur, put an end to Vir Singh's regime," he said.

Vasant's face brightened up. He bowed to the king once again. Great was his joy.

* * *

It was a full-moon night. Vasant's followers had gathered in the valley. With great excitement they were waiting for the arrival of their beloved king. They were about hundred, all able-bodied and brave young men.

"Vasant!"

A suppressed voice called Vasant from behind a rock.



Vasant turned to look. Yes, the caller was none other than the king.

"My lord!" Vasant greeted him, bowing down.

"Vasant, there is no time to lose. Vir Singh's army is approaching this hideout. They plan to block both the ends of the pass so that none of you can escape. But they are about to reach the front end of the pass. It will take some time for them to reach the other end. Let me stand at the entrance and fight them. Escape through the other end! Don't waste a moment!" commanded the king.

Vasant understood the gravity



of the situation. At least once Vir Singh had got the scent of their movements. A hundred young men, squeezed in the pass, with both the routes for escape blocked, would mean the end of the rebellion. That must not happen.

Vasant ordered his followers to escape through the rear end of the pass. His disciplined followers obeyed his order at once, but he stayed on with the king.

"Why don't you go away?" demanded the king, betraying some restlessness.

"My lord, I cannot leave you alone, come what may!"

Vasant's determined voice was

enough to convince the king that he would not desert him. And there was no time for argument. Vir Singh's soldiers, led by Kapalchand, were about to enter the pass.

The king unsheathed his sword and stood at the narrow entrance. Vasant stood behind him, for there was no space for two persons to wield their weapons on that narrow spot.

"Come on, march into the pass!" Kapalchand commanded his men, himself stepping back.

The first soldier who tried to enter it received a kick from the king and rolled down.

"Beware of your fate if you try to enter the pass!" shouted Vasant at a hint from the king. The king did not wish his own voice to be heard.

"This is the last night, rather the last minute, of your life, Vasant!" shouted Kapalchand, and he advanced himself. Kapalchand had grown sure that the rebels guarding the entrance had no swords with them. Why otherwise should they kick the soldier instead of cutting him down? Kapalchand wished to take the credit of himself killing or capturing Vasant.

"Take care of your life, Kapal-

chand! We just want you to retreat. We don't wish to kill you! Don't you see that we are not using arms?" said Vasant. But, in a swift move, Kapalchand threw his spear towards the entrance. It struck the king in his chest. He fell down. Kapalchand took a step nearer, mistaking the king to be Vasant.

"You brute, you wretch!" shrieked Vasant as his sword swung. Kapalchand's head rolled off his neck. There was panic among the soldiers. "The general is killed! Kapalchand is finished!" were the fearful cries heard. The soldiers retreated.

But those soldiers who had by then entered the pass through its other end, were about to reach the spot. They had faced no resistance, because Vasant's followers had escaped in time.

Vasant carried the king into a secret cave behind a thin waterfall. The soldiers went out of the pass, surprised to none. Of course, once on the other side, they must have known the fate of their general!

Vasant carefully laid the king down on the floor of the cave. He fetched water and made him drink it. When he was sure that the soldiers had left the place, he



lighted a torch of twigs which had been kept ready there.

"Vasant, I am dying. But you must keep up the fighting spirit. If I had not revealed myself to your men or my subjects in general, it is because I had no interest in the throne. But there is no hope of any change in Vir Singh's character. He would never stop harassing the people. So, my parting advice is, fight on!" said the king. His voice was growing feeble. There was much bleeding from his chest. Vasant tried to stop the flow by the help of a turban, but the wound had been very grievous.

"My lord," sobbed out Vasant,



"once you are gone, what would keep up our zeal? For whom to fight? We may dethrone Vir Singh, but in favour of whom? The queen and the prince too are gone!"

"Vasant! The queen is gone, but she ~~had~~ seen to it that the prince ~~was~~ safe. Yes, he is there, growing up as a bright lad. One day he would be with you—and just ~~a~~ a sage is his guardian now, I would like you to become his

guardian when the time comes!" said the king.

"What! Is the prince alive? Then, of course, we would fight for him; for us he would be the rising sun. We will dispel the clouds for him to shine! Where is he, my lord?" asked Vasant, agog with excitement.

The king told him everything. And, in the last quarter of the night, he breathed his last.

To continue

THE TRUTHFUL

Manohar went to the fish market and paid for ~~an~~ excellent fresh fish. As the seller was about to pack it, he said, "Please throw it at me. Let ~~me~~ catch it!"

The surprised seller did as instructed, but then asked, "How did it help you, sir?"

"You see, I am under an oath to speak nothing but the truth for the whole day. I went for angling and

spent four hours but could not catch a single fish. Now I can tell my people at home that I *caught it!*"



THE SINGER'S INSPIRATION

A wealthy man visited a holy city. He took a fine house on rent. But he could not sleep the whole night. It was because somebody kept on singing very loudly in a hut adjacent to his lodge.

In the morning the wealthy man summoned the poor man who lived in the hut and asked him, "What inspired you to sing throughout the night?"

"Sir, it is my misery. I had no money, no food, no medicine for my ailing wife. The songs welled out of my deep sorrow," answered the poor man.

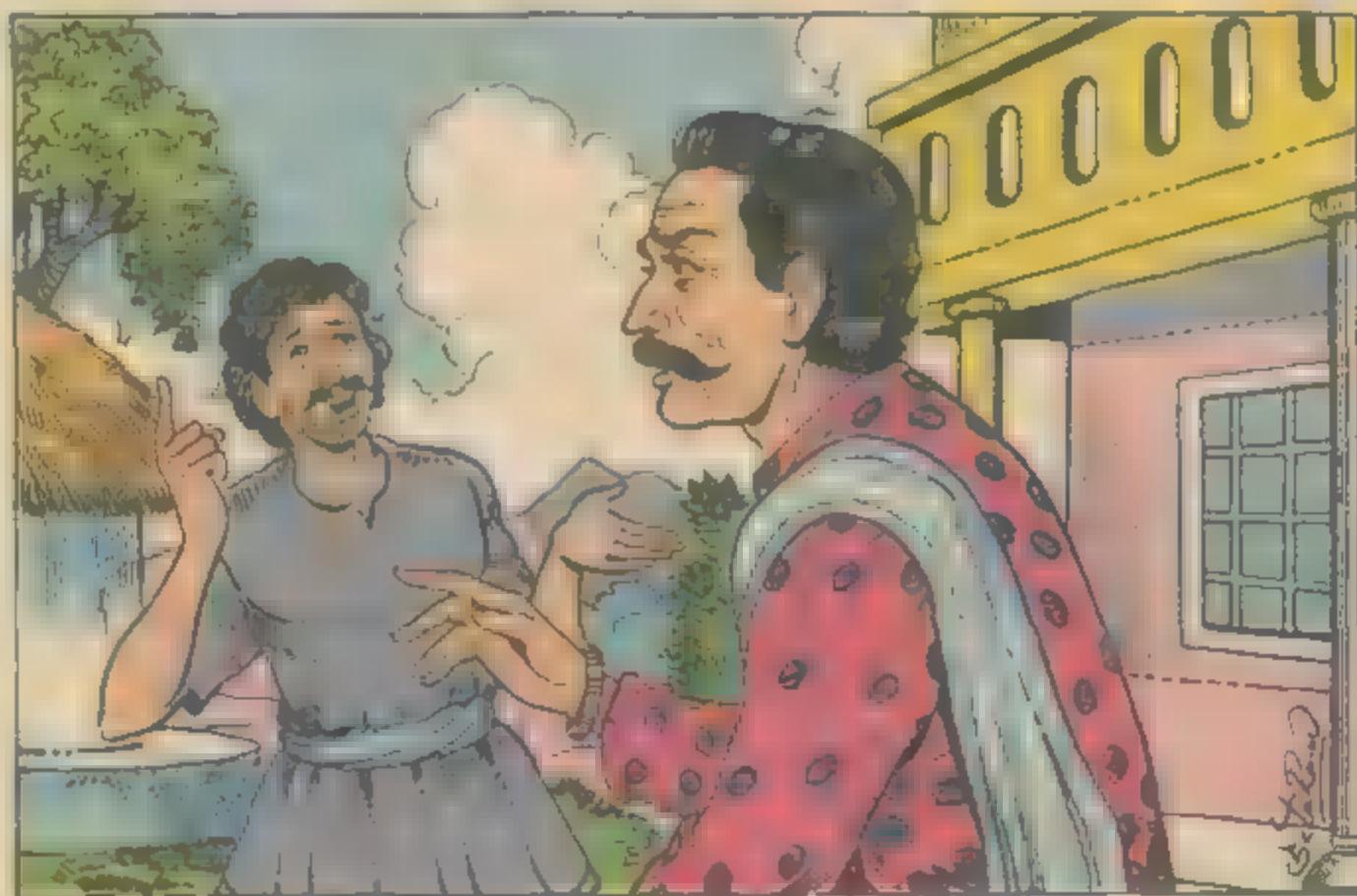
The wealthy man gave him a thousand rupees and said, "I hope, this would put an end to your misery."

"No doubt it would, sir!" said the poor man in great joy.

But the wealthy man had no luck even the next night. The neighbour kept singing.

When it was morning, the wealthy man sent for the neighbour again and asked, "What made you sing throughout the night even after your misery was over?"

"It is joy sir, sheer joy!" replied the neighbour, displaying a broad smile.



THE WAY OF THE WORLD

UNCLE HABUL CAN MANAGE!



Uncle Habul went to the town for some business and checked into a room in a lodge.

"What is the time?" he asked the gentleman who occupied the next room. The gentleman answered him.



"Not necessary," replied Uncle Habul. "How would you know the time if you wish to know it at night?" asked the gentleman. "I can manage to know it," replied Uncle Habul, with a smile.



But Uncle Habul kept on asking him the same question every now and then. "Why don't you keep a clock or a pocket watch yourself?" asked the irritated gentleman.

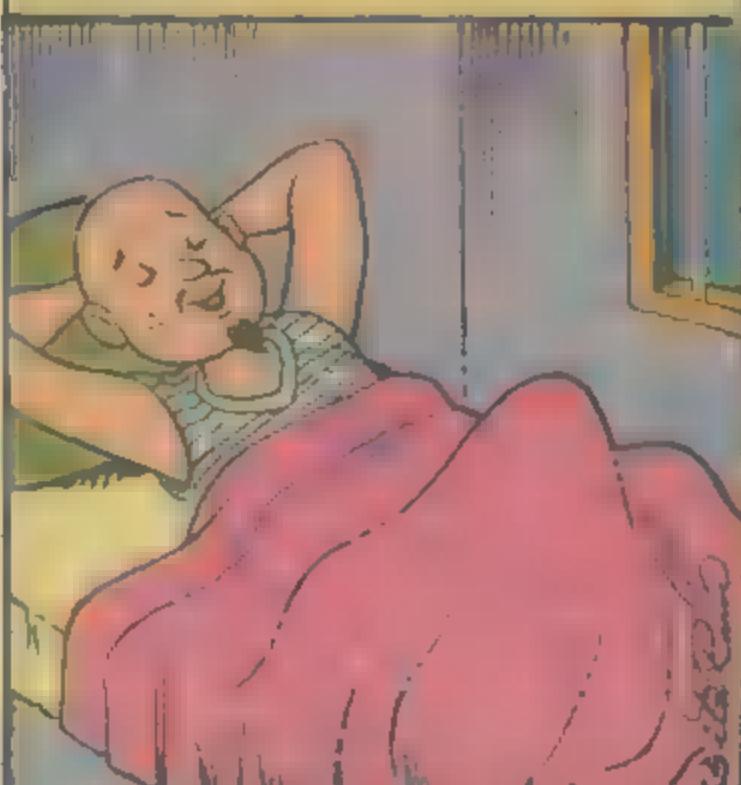


It was night. Suddenly Uncle Habul, through his window, began to blow a bugle. It broke the silence of the night with a jolt.



The gentleman woke up, half-opened the door of his room and shouted, "Who is playing the bugle at half-past midnight?"

Uncle Habul stopped and went to sleep. The gentleman also shut his door and retired to bed.



"Good morning, sir, when at night I had an urge to know the time; I managed to know it. It was half-past midnight," Uncle Habul informed the gentleman.



THE CRIMINAL'S MIND

The kingdom of Shyamnagar was ruled by King Bhupal Narendra. It was a small kingdom, but the king made it an example of sound administration. He never allowed any criminal to go free; he never let a man who had done something good to go unrewarded.

One day a woman met the king. She was in tears. "My lord," she said. "My husband, Jaikant, used to run a shop in our village. Two days ago he went to the town to buy several goods for the shop, but he did not come back. I sent my nephew to the town yesterday to meet the merchants who used to supply the merchandise to him. To my horror I learnt that they never saw him. In other words, he did not reach the town!"

"What is there to be so upset

about it? He might have gone somewhere else," observed the king.

"My lord, a villager who was returning from the town saw him getting into a boat for crossing the river. The town is on the opposite bank of the river. Had he reached the other bank, he would have reached the town. My fear is..." the woman could not complete her statement. She broke down.

The king consoled her with many words and promised to take care of her family and then sent his detectives to find out who were plying the ferry-boats on that particular day. The detectives reported to him that there were two boatmen plying two ferry-boats. One was Ghanshyam and the other one was Natoo.

The detectives also informed the king that Natoo had only recently started his career as a boatman. Earlier he had suffered imprisonment accused of burglary.

Meanwhile Jaikant's dead body was found in the river. The king himself inspected the dead body before it was cremated.

The king sent for Ghanashyam and asked him if he knew Jaikant. "I knew him, my lord. Several times I have carried him across the river—but not during the past week," replied Ghanashyam.

"But did you by any chance see Jaikant in the other boat two

days ago?" asked the king.

Ghanashyam thought for a while and said, "My lord, when I ply the boat, I remain thoroughly engrossed in my humble work. Two days ago, while I was returning from the town side of the river with a solitary passenger, I heard a splashing sound. Then I looked at Natoo's boat. But it was empty."

"Empty? Where does Natoo live—in the town or in the village?" asked the king.

"In the village, my lord."

"Why should he ply his boat towards the town without any passenger if he was to start from the village side?" asked the king.



"I have not thought over it, my lord. Maybe, he did not find any passenger and he thought of finding some on the other side!" said Ghanashyam.

"What made that splashing sound?" asked the king.

"I have not thought over the question, my lord," replied Ghanashyam.

The king immediately sent his sepoys to arrest Natoo. The fellow was brought to the king's court.

"Look here, you murderer! You ~~were~~ to be hanged for pushing Jaikant off your boat!"

"I never pushed him, my lord! As there was a gust of wind, he fell off the boat—along with his moneybag!"

"Why did you not try to save him?" asked the king.

"I did, my lord. I took hold of

his hair. But it was oily. It slipped off my grip and he was drowned," replied Natoo.

Natoo's house was searched and Jaikant's moneybag was discovered. Natoo confessed to his crime. The money was restored to Jaikant's widow. Natoo was ordered to be executed.

"My lord, the circumstances led us to suspect Natoo. But how were you ~~so~~ sure that he had pushed Jaikant into the river?" the minister asked the king.

"The moment he was questioned about Jaikant, the first thing he said was that Jaikant fell into the river with the moneybag. The fellow was so conscious of his moneybag! Secondly, he said that he tried to save Jaikant by holding on to his oily hair! Well, we saw the dead body. Jaikant was bald!" answered the king.



CHANDAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-22

TREASURY OF KNOWLEDGE

WHO IS HE?

In the ancient city of Athens there was a sage. Many people came to him seeking his advice on many problems. One day a young man met him and said, "I want to be a great orator. I have travelled much; I have met many important people. All of them agree that I am quite intelligent. But I must learn the method of speech-making, how to influence people..." The young man went on speaking for fifteen minutes and then said in conclusion, "If you teach me the art of delivering speeches, I will gladly pay you your fee."

"Thanks. But I must claim fees on two accounts!" said the sage.

"Why on two accounts?" asked the young man.

"First, I must teach you the art of silence. And then the art of speech-making," replied the sage.

Who was the sage?

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Which mythical bird is the national symbol of a country? Of which country?
2. Who was the famous man who in 1948 was offered the Presidentship of a country in which he did not live?
3. Of which country?
4. Why was it so?
5. What is the meaning of the name Lanka (Sri Lanka)?

AYODHYA THE INVINCIBLE CITY

Ayodhya means the city that was invincible. No enemy could infiltrate it. Situated on the river Saryu, it was the capital of Koshala, once ruled by the kings of the Solar dynasty. Among them was Dasharatha.

Ayodhya is one of the seven sacred cities of India because it was the birthplace of Lord

Rama. Traditions going back to a remote past point out the spots where Rama was born, where he performed a great Yajna, where the kitchen of Mother Sita was situated and so on and so forth.

The capital of Koshala was later shifted to Saketa and still later to Shravasti. In the 4th-5th century, Ayodhya was the second

NEWS FLASH

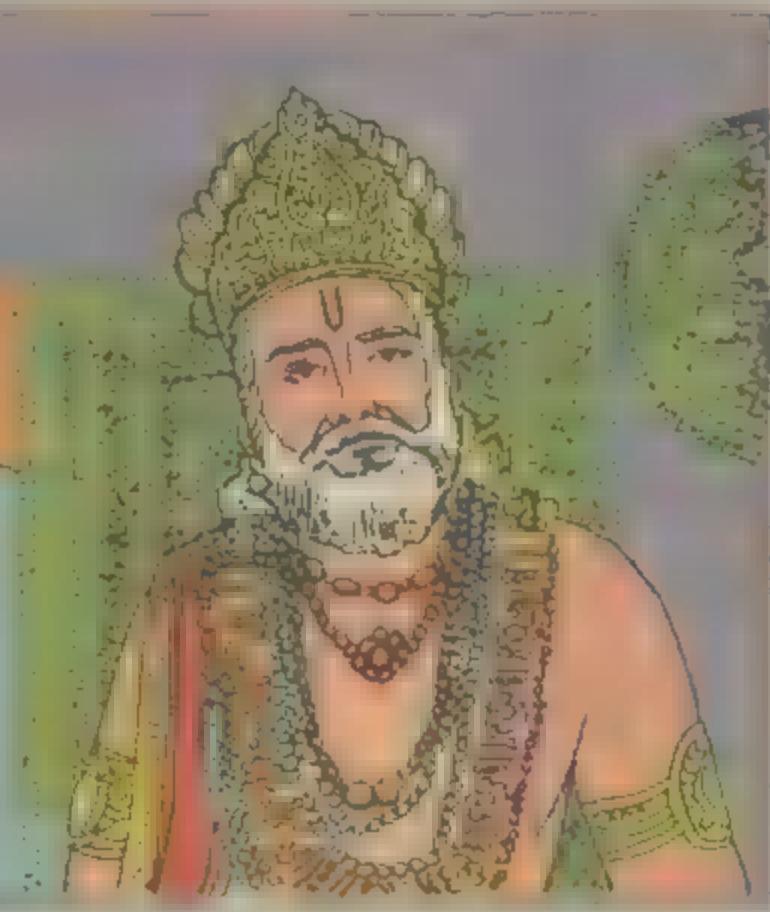
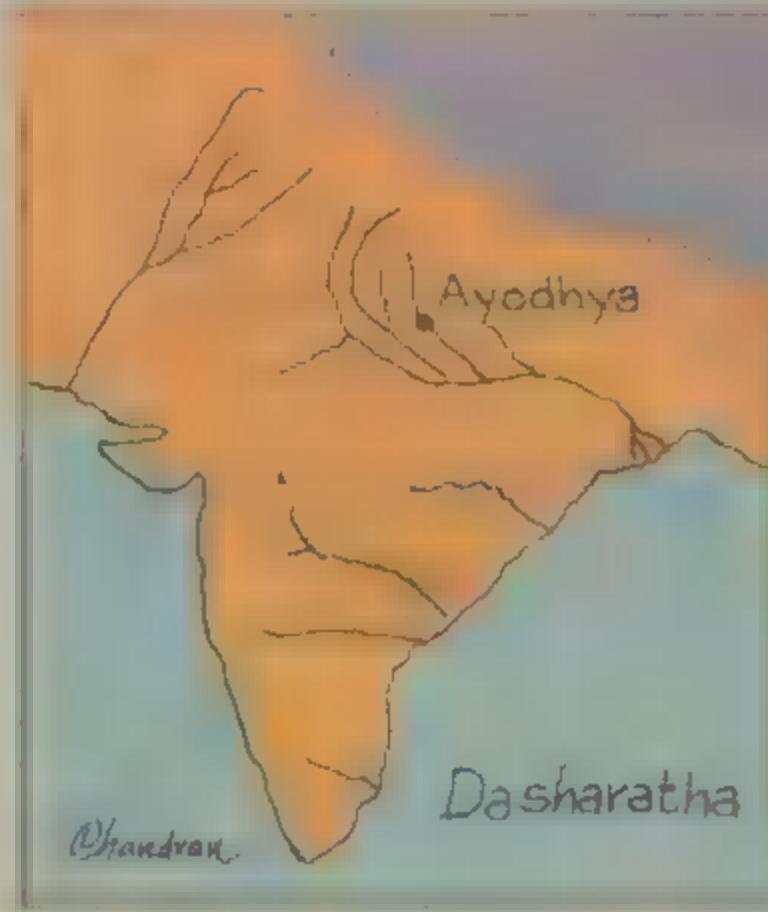
The Youngest Doctor

By the time you read this news, the seventeen-year old Balamurali Krishna Ambati, an Indian student in New York, might have already emerged as the world's youngest qualified doctor. An Israeli student studying in Italy had been the youngest doctor till now, ■ the age of eighteen.



The Whale is a Singer

A research lasting twenty-six years has established that the noise made by the whales is not all the same. There are ■ noises, which ■ comparable to singing by men. Two whales can exchange their emotions through their songs.



capital of the Gupta kings. Ayodhya lost its political importance thereafter, but no other city excepting Mathura can rival it in the love it has inspired in the hearts of countless Indians through the ages.

Ayodhya was also a great seat of Buddhism as well as Jainism. Of the 24 Jain Tirthankaras, 23 hailed from the Ikshvaku dynasty—to which Rama belonged. Of them five illustrious teachers, Adinath, Ajitnath, Avinandanath, Anantanath and Sumatinath were born in Ayodhya.

The modern Ayodhya is on the

Lucknow-Gorakhpur Railways in Uttar Pradesh. It is a small town despite its hoary antiquity. Apart from the places associated with the memory of Rama and Sita and the shrines dedicated to them, there is the Nageshwar Nath temple believed to have been founded by Kusha, the son of Rama, the Hanuman Garh temple, dedicated to the great devotee of Rama and Sita built by Nawab Shuzaullah, etc. Twenty-five km away from Ayodhya is Nandigram, the place from where Bharata ruled the kingdom for 14 years when Rama was away.

LET US EXPLORE THE WORLD OF LITERATURE

1. Who was the great Indian poet who became educated very late in life and used to be bullied when he got up and lived for 30 years?
2. Who was the poet writer who died the day Shakespeare died?
3. Had Bhartrihari and Kavilalji any daughter?
4. Who was the woman sage who is one of the authors of the Andhra hymns?
5. What is Shataka?

ANSWERS

WHO IS HE?

Socrates.

DO YOU KNOW?

1. Garuda is the national symbol of Indonesia.
2. Albert Einstein.
3. Israel.
4. Because Israel, the land for the Jews, had just been formed and Einstein was a Jew.
5. The Shining Land.

LITERATURE

1. Petrarch (1304-1374).
2. Cervantes, the author of *Don Quixote*.
3. Yes, Duhshala.
4. Gargi, the daughter of Sage Garga.
5. A hundred couplets on a single theme, like Bhartrihari's *Niti-Shataka* or Shilhana's *Shanti-Shataka*.



STORY ON RAMAKRISHNA (5)

The great ascetic Totapuri was surprised to see that Sri Ramakrishna—as Gadadhar was to be known henceforth—learnt whatever he had to teach with incredible rapidity.

At this phase of his life, he used to get easily identified with others. Once, seated on the river-bank, he saw a boatman beating another boatman. Sri Ramakrishna cried in pain. Marks of blows were seen on his own back.

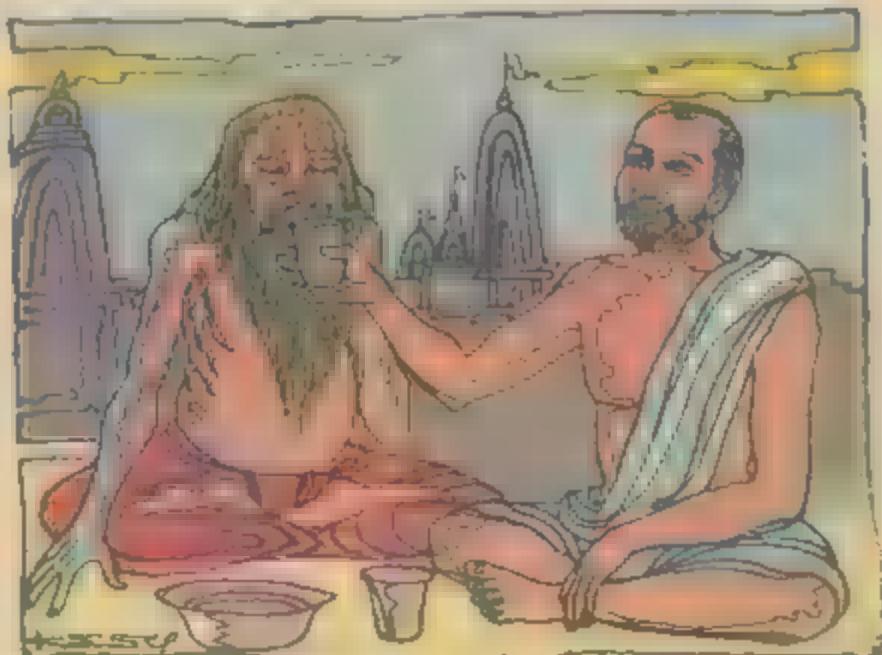


After his Advaitic experiences under Totapuri's guidance, Sri Ramakrishna was curious to know what kind of spiritual experiences come to a true practitioner of the Islam. He began practising the Muhammadan discipline and was satisfied.



At Mathur Babu's earnest request, Sri Ramakrishna accompanied him on a pilgrimage. As they approached Varanasi by boat, to Sri Ramakrishna the city appeared to be made of gold. The mystery is, he saw the secret spiritual Varanasi, hidden behind the material city.

Before the temples of Viswanath, and Kedarnath, he often went into trances. Needless to say, unlike the innumerable pilgrims who ~~saw~~ only the external deities, Sri Ramakrishna felt the Divine presence in the idols and symbols.



In Varanasi he met another great sage of the age, Trailanga Swami. The Swami had strange powers, but he was also as innocent ~~as~~ a child. Sri Ramakrishna fed him with *payasam* with great love. In him, he saw the emanation of Lord Shiva.

Once Hriday, the nephew and attendant of Sri Ramakrishna, desired to perform the worship of Mother Durga at his own home in the village and wanted Sri Ramakrishna to be with him. Sri Ramakrishna did not go, but promised to be there in spirit. Indeed, Hriday saw him standing near the deity.



In July 1871, the illustrious heir of Rani Rasmoni, Mathur Babu, took seriously ill. Sri Ramakrishna sat in trance on the fateful day—while Mathur Babu was at Kallighat. He opened his eyes and announced the death of his devotee, before the news reached Dakshineswar.

In 1872, Sharada Devi, Sri Ramakrishna's wife, came to Dakshineswar. Worthy consort of the great soul, she knew that a spiritual destiny awaited her, not a worldly life. Silently she surrendered herself to the Master.





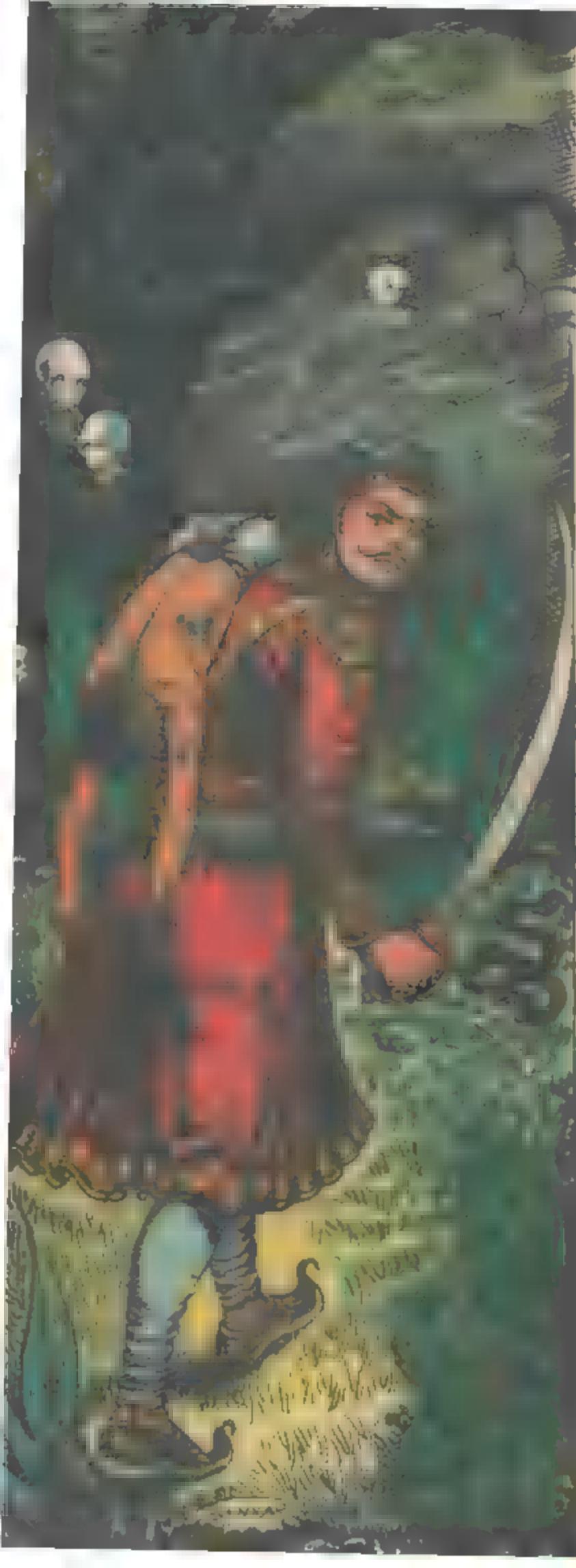
Sri Ramakrishna, one night performed a puja when he put flowers on Sharada Devi as if she was a goddess and chanted hymns. Indeed, he charged her with spiritual powers—and she was capable of absorbing them.

Sri Ramakrishna had great interest in the Bible. One day he saw the picture of Mother Mary with the Infant Jesus on her lap. As he gazed at it charmed, a shaft of light came from the picture and fell on him. He was amazed.



Three days later, as he was alone under a tree, a luminous person came and embraced him and merged in him. Sri Ramakrishna knew that he was none other than Jesus Christ. Sri Ramakrishna believed Christ to be an incarnation of the Lord.

To continue



NEW TALES OF KING VIKRAM AND THE VAMPIRE

DIALOGUE WITH A HUNGRY LION

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. Gusts of wind shook the trees. At the intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke, "O King, what reward do you expect from your labours? Are you sure that by the time you come to the end of your endeavour, you will still be interested in the reward? To explain my question, let me narrate an incident to you. Well, you, like thousands of others, already know the first part of the incident. It is about the three friends who revived ■



lion. However, before telling you what you do not know, let me tell you what you know—more or less. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you relief."

The vampire went on: Years ago there was a sage named Divyananda who ran a gurukul. His hermitage was situated on a charming spot, between a hill and a forest, on the bank of a swift-flowing river. His students lived in a cluster of huts in front of his cave.

At one time three princes lived in the gurukul. One of them was the heir to the throne and the other two were his step-brothers.

They were not very good students, but the guru did his best to teach them such subjects which would help them in the future. The princes, however, were quite curious about supernatural things. The sage had several palm-leaf books on different occult sciences. The princes read them whenever they could gain access to them, without the sage's knowledge.

Among the other disciples of the sage was Govind, an intelligent and wise young man. He learnt yoga from the sage and he wished to stay on in the hermitage as an ascetic. The sage knew that Govind had all the qualities to succeed him as the guru. But he also knew that Govind was not completely ready for that kind of life. There were moments when Govind dreamt of leading a prosperous life in the society.

One day the princes heard that their father was ill. Though nobody had come with any news from the court or they had not been summoned, they decided to proceed to the city. The sage said, "You have completed your studies and I have no reason to detain you. But you should wait for the king's messengers to come." But the princes insisted

on leaving the very next day. The sage thought that it would not be proper for them to go without a sensible escort. He asked the elder prince, "Would you like Govind to accompany you? I think he would be the best friend, philosopher and guide!"

"Sir, there is no doubt about that," said the elder prince. They loved and respected Govind.

"Good. In fact, I would like you to appoint him as your adviser. When you ascend the throne, you can appoint him your minister—if Govind has no objection to it," said the sage.

"I should be most happy to have him as my adviser and minister," agreed the elder prince.

The sage called Govind privately and told him about the arrangements he had made for him. He then added, "Govind, you have the capacity to protect those who trust you. So, I would like you to accompany the princes and remain as his adviser, for though they are good boys, they are not wise."

"But, sir, I would have liked to continue my yoga, remaining here as your disciple..." murmured Govind.

"But you have also a desire for a comfortable social life. I know,



it is difficult to remain truthful and at the same time serve as a successful minister. My advice to you is, you can try. If you feel that you are not meant for that kind of life, you can come back," said the sage.

Next day the three princes and Govind set out for the capital. They must cross the whole forest. The sun was overhead when they reached a dense area of the forest with a brook flowing by a rock. They sat down there for a little rest and for eating the food they carried with them.

Suddenly the youngest prince spied upon some bones and exclaimed, "These are the

remains of a lion. I know the occult principle by which to join them and construct the full skeleton."

"And I can endow it with blood and flesh!" exclaimed the second prince.

"And, of course, I know the science of breathing life into it!" asserted the heir to the throne.

"Please don't do any such thing!" anxiously cried out Govind. But the princes were so very excited with the idea of performing the miracle that Govind's words fell flat on them. They were discussing among themselves the prospect of their

entering the city riding the lion! It would be such an awe-inspiring sight! The citizens would be deeply impressed!

They had already begun to cast their magic on the remains of the lion when Govind cautioned them again—but in vain. All he could do was climb the nearest tree when the scattered bones became a full skeleton and it was endowed with flesh and blood and then a huge lion shook its body and looked at the princes with glittering eyes. It gave out a blood-curdling roar and the three princes huddled together and shivered like blades of grass in the wind.



The lion was about to spring upon them when Govind shouted, "Stop!"

Now, Govind knew the secret art of talking to the animals. When the lion turned and looked at him, he told it, "How can you kill those who revived you?"

"I am sorry. I did not know that they revived me. But let me tell you that along with my life they also revived in me my hunger—a hunger that goes back to many years—may be a century!"

As Govind kept the lion engaged in conversation, the princes slipped away.

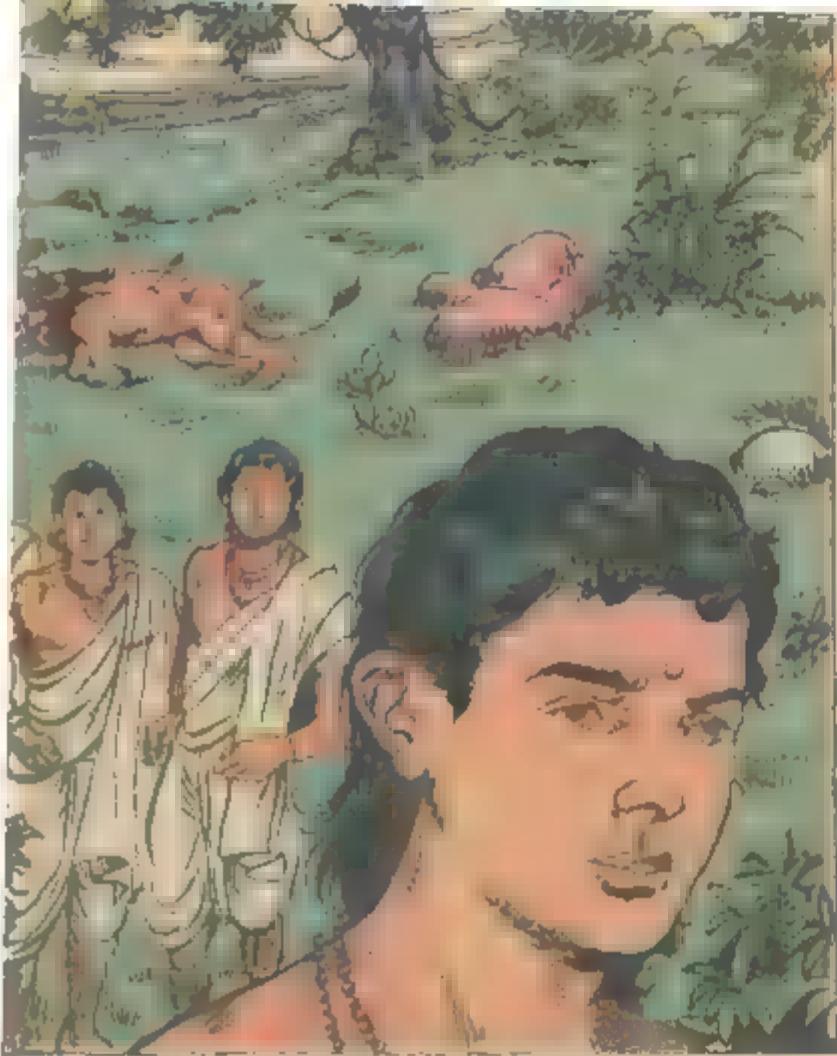
The lion and Govind argued

on the issues of morality and principles. Said the lion, "I agree that I should not eat the princes, for life is a precious thing and I owe it to them. At the same time, I should not lose this precious thing once I have got it—and I shall lose it if I wait for catching any animal. I must eat immediately. And they are the only food available to me! Once I have gathered the minimum strength, I will catch animals."

"It is not correct to say that they are the only food available to you. Here am I, an alternative dish!" said Govind, ready to come down.

"Wait!" said the lion. "Why





does one live?" it asked.

"To progress in life—from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge," replied Govind.

"If that is so, you are the one who gave me the knowledge of what is desirable and what is not. I would have killed the princes but for your telling me that they revived me. In other words, because you gave me knowledge, you are my teacher. How can I eat you? I trust, you will show me some other way of survival—instantly!"

"I appreciate your stand," said Govind. "Nevertheless, I offer my life to you because I am committed to protect the

princes."

Meanwhile the princes had returned with two tribal archers. They took aim at the lion. Govind saw it, but before he knew what to do, the archers shot their arrows and the lion fell dead.

The princes jumped in joy. As Govind climbed down the elder prince bowed to him and said, "You truly know how to protect those who trust you."

"No, I don't know!" calmly said Govind.

"This is your humility. Now, let us proceed to our destination. I will not only make you my minister, but also give you rewards that would make you the richest [redacted] in our kingdom next to the king! Saving all the three sons of the king is no small matter!"

"The riches will make me poor. Please proceed to the palace with these worthy archers [redacted] your escorts. Give them some rewards I [redacted] going back to my guru," said Govind and he returned to the hermitage disregarding all the entreaties of the princes.

The vampire paused for [redacted] moment and then, in [redacted] challenging tone, demanded of King Vikram, "It is a fact that Govind

protected the princes by persuading the lion to spare their lives. How then did he assert that he did not know how to protect those who trusted him? He had a desire for wealth. How then did he say that the promised riches would make him poor? Answer me, if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Forthwith answered King Vikram, "True, Govind protected the princes by promptly talking to the lion. But he could not protect the lion who trusted him even more than the princes trusted him. That is why he asserted that he was unable to protect those who trusted him. Secondly, the lion's question regarding why one lives and his answer that one lives for know-

ledge had suddenly awakened him to his own purpose in life. He had some fascination for wealth, but he was one of those who are self-conscious and who are keen to make progress in life. He realised that what he would lose by leading a comfortable life in the court would be much more precious than mere wealth. No doubt there are rare people like King Janaka who could lead ■ Yogic life while discharging the duties of an administrator. But Govind was not one of them. He had to choose between the two patterns of life. He chose to remain with the sage."

No sooner had King Vikram finished giving the answers than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

(Based on a short story by Manoj Das)



THE STRANGE BRIDEGROOM

nce upon a time in the land of Portugal there was a small kingdom.

The royal couple and their subjects were in all things very happy, except that the king and the queen were childless.

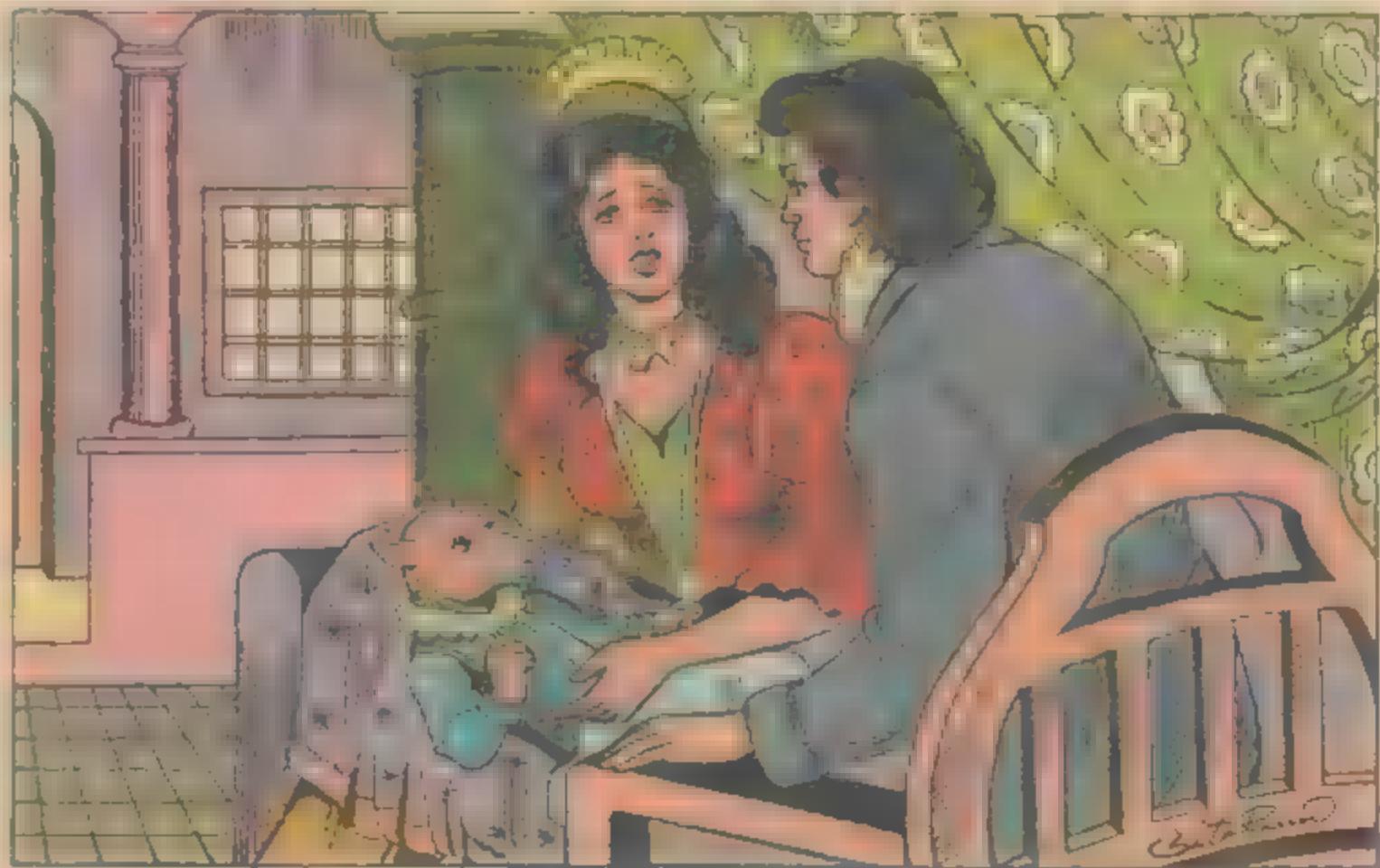
One day, as the queen was taking a stroll in the palace gardens, there appeared before her an old woman who said in a quavering voice, "I know your sorrow, O Queen. Do not lose heart. For soon you shall give birth to a son, a good-natured

boy, but with only one defect."

"Let there be ten defects—but let me have a son!" exclaimed the queen.

In due course of time, the queen gave birth to a boy—but with the head of a horse. He of course had a human voice, soft and sweet.

At first his parents were much grieved by his appearance. But as years passed, they became accustomed to the prince with the unusual appearance. Life went on smoothly, till the day arrived



when it was thought proper for the prince to have a wife.

But who will marry a horse-headed man? The king made a proclamation that if any maiden, high or low, rich or poor, would accept the hand of his son, he would bestow upon her gifts fitting for the world's most excellent bride. Alas! His offer fell on deaf ears.

Thus a year passed. One day as the king was returning from his hunt one evening, he felt very tired and thirsty. Sighting a humble dwelling at the foot of a hill he rode towards it, asking his bodyguards to leave him alone.

His knock was answered by a young girl who was both surprised and happy to see their beloved king standing before her. She refreshed him with honey, fruit and cool water from the stream.

After resting awhile, when the king was about to depart, the beautiful maiden said, "O King, your eyes speak of a deep anguish. What ails thee, your Majesty?"

Then the king told Anna, for that was the poor girl's name, about the state of affairs in the royal household.

Anna was not only beautiful



but also compassionate. She volunteered to marry the prince. When the king reminded her of the strange appearance of his son, she replied with a smile, "I've already seen our prince, O king! I will marry him in order to comfort you and him in his despair."

Great festivities were held. Gifts in abundance were showered by the grateful king and queen on the brave bride-to-be. Moreover, the prince too came to meet his future wife.

Anna had three cousins—girls of her age—who were never tired of teasing her for her decision to marry a horse-headed young



man. But in their hearts, they envied her too. After all she was going to be the queen of the land!

Then a day before the wedding ceremony, the king's minister came to inform Anna that the prince would come in a procession, on the morrow, to lead her ceremoniously to the palace. When the procession came, Anna searched in vain for her horse-headed prince. But instead of the familiar figure at the rear of the bodyguards, rode an exceedingly handsome young man.

Scorned by her three envious sisters who thought that the prince had changed his mind, Anna fixed her gaze more

intently on the splendid youth. Tracing some resemblance to her prince in the outline of his figure, she exclaimed, "O my Prince!" But the procession passed by her.

Her sisters laughed with contempt. "If that was your prince, then why did he ride by in silence?" they asked.

Anna went to the garden and as she sat puzzled under a tree, a crow swooped lightly to a branch above her head cawing incessantly. Suddenly the harsh sound faded away and changed into a familiar human voice. Anna sat up startled.

"Do not be alarmed, my bride," said the crow, "I'm indeed your prince. Be calm and listen. Since my birth my life is ruled by a strange fate. But I had been assured that I would gain a normal human appearance the day my wedding would become a certainty—with my bride herself choosing me. This morning I ceased to be a horse-headed man. I heard distinctly a voice speaking these words, "If you pass by your bride's doors and she recognises you but keeps quiet, the spell will be broken. But if she utters a word, the worst will befall."

The crow hopped down to a

branch nearer to Anna and resumed, "You know what happened then. How your sisters provoked you to speak. As soon as I passed by you, I was changed into a crow. Anna, do you have the courage and determination to do everything necessary to bring me back to my human form?"

"My Prince," replied Anna, "I love you and I shall do whatever is necessary for that, even if it means my death!"

"Then, listen attentively," said the prince. "You must journey to the Crows' Tower and tread the long way with iron shoes. When you arrive at the tower you will see a thousand crows. But if you can identify me immediately and seize me tightly by the wings, the spell will be broken. But if you fail, you will see your prince no more!"

The crow then descended from his perch and, with a gentle touch of its beak on the girl's forehead, rose into the sky and disappeared over the hills. Anna carefully watched the flight of the crow, for it gave her the clue to the way she must go.

She then went to the blacksmith's forge. "Iron shoes?" exclaimed the surprised man, "Iron shoes for a pretty lass



like you?"

Nevertheless, won over by her sad smile, he made for her a pair of dainty little shoes.

Anna set out immediately on her mission. For many a day and night she travelled through different lands.

One day when the sun was just dipping over the western horizon, she came to a hut. Feeling the need for some rest and refreshment, she knocked on the door. An old lady with a wrinkled face opened the door and said, "Come in, bold damsel, come in and learn your task." Anna entered the hut, rather surprised.

Her aged hostess fed her and said, "Dear child, your lover is in the hands of evil powers. Only the Winds of Heaven can lead you to your destination."

She waved a wand and chanting some abracadabra, summoned the Winds. "Enter, O Lord of the Four Directions!" she said.

At these words the doors flung open and a gust of wind swept all around. The weather-beaten hut swayed and the embers in the hearth leapt into flames. Anna felt herself lifted up in the air.

"O noble Sons of Heaven, take this fair lady gently in your arms and lead her to her

bridegroom. Farewell, O sweet damsel!"

One after another the four Winds took charge of her. Anna saw nothing, but felt strong airy arms about her, carrying her forward with kindly support. Her iron-shod feet seemed to lose all weight and scarcely touched the ground -- so swiftly, so lightly she sailed forward!

At dawn one day, the West Wind placed Anna at the foot of a hill. On its top stood a tall, dark tower.

"My task ends here," the Wind whispered in her ear. "Yonder is the Crows' Tower. You must now follow your heart. I wish you





well, brave lass!"

Anna crossed the huge gates of the tower. She saw an open space with tiers of walls, rising higher and higher.

She also saw before her, seated on the tiers of walls thousands of crows. Bewildered, she stood still for a moment, unable to decide her next move.

All look alike. Which one is her handsome prince? she wondered.

Then, suddenly dashing towards the walls, Anna shouted, "O my Prince!" The crows flew helter-skelter. Only one sat unmoved. Before the bird could even ruffle a feather, Anna seized it and stretched its wings.

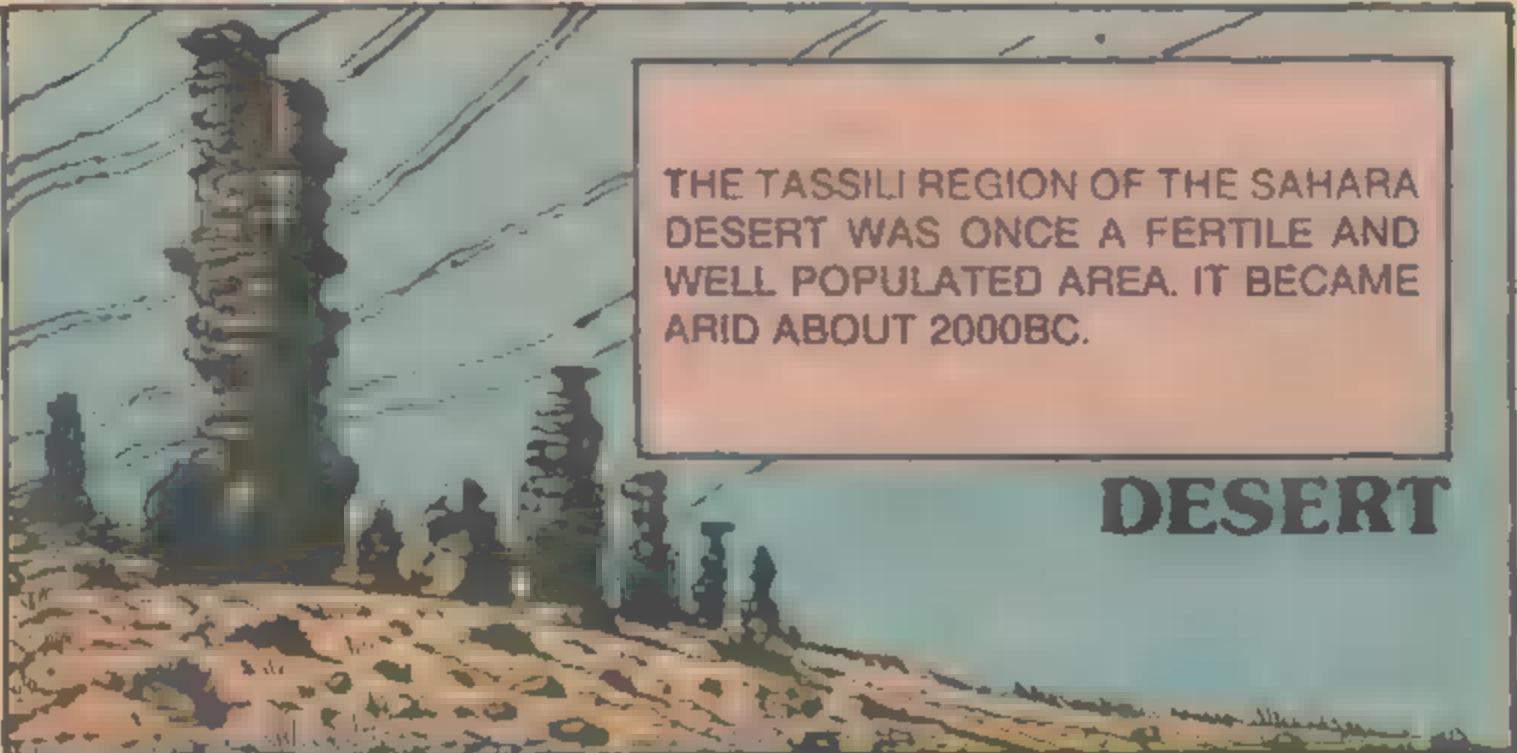
Lo and behold! She found herself in the palace gardens. Before her stood a bright young man, all smiles. The prince, for it was he, stooped and kissed her hand.

The wedding was performed with great pomp and show. Suddenly, like a huge dark cloud thousands of crows descended on the palace roof. "Let them be fed sumptuously," said the prince. "They had been kind to me when I was with them. If they flew off so readily at Anna's approach, it is to give her the chance to recognise me!" said the happy prince.

--Retold by Anup Kishore Das

Poor men want meat for their stomachs, rich men stomachs for their meat.

—Anthony Copley



THE TASSILI REGION OF THE SAHARA DESERT WAS ONCE A FERTILE AND WELL POPULATED AREA. IT BECAME ARID ABOUT 2000BC.

DESERT

TAIL OF A BEAVER



THE ~~FLAT~~ FLAT TAIL OF THE BEAVER ACTS AS A RUDDER TO STEER IT THROUGH THE WATER. IT IS ALSO USED AS A WARNING SIGNAL WHEN SLAPPED HARD ON WATER IT CAN BE HEARD FOR MILES.



Heaviest Insect

THE WORLD'S HEAVIEST INSECT IS THE GOLIATH BEETLE OF EQUATORIAL AFRICA. ADULT MALES WEIGH ABOUT 3.53 OZ. (100G) AND MEASURE ABOUT 4.33 in (110MM).

WORLD OF SPORT



First
bicycle
race...

THE FIRST BICYCLE ROAD RACE WAS HELD IN 1869 AND RAN FROM PARIS TO ROUEN, IT WAS WON BY BRITAIN'S JAMES MOORE.



*King of the
Channel...*

■ SEPTEMBER 1980, MIKE REID MADE HIS TWENTIETH SUCCESSFUL SWIM OF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL.

SOCCEr

THE TERM 'SOCCEr' WAS COINED BY CHARLES WEREFORD BROWN, AN FA OFFICIAL IN THE 1860s. IT IS A PLAY ON THE WORD 'ASSOCIATION'.





THE MAGIC BAG

Bhallav was returning home from his uncle's house. As he happened to pass through a lonely meadow, he saw someone lying under a tree. What he saw next shocked him. A cobra was approaching the sleeping man, raising its head.

There was no time to lose. Either Bhallav should rise to the occasion and save the stranger, or he must witness the stranger's death.

Bhallav took a decisive step. He rushed at the cobra and caught hold of its tail and flung it into a bush. The cobra tried to bite him before being hurled, but he escaped narrowly.

The stranger had awakened just in time to see what Bhallav did. Tears of joy and gratefulness rolling down his cheeks, he thanked Bhallav and said, "I

should reward you for your timely action. But I have only one property with me. I do not know how useful that would be to you. What do you do?" asked the stranger.

"I do nothing. In fact, I am looking for a job. I am very poor. Luckily, I do not have any dependant. I live all alone," replied Bhallav.

"In that case, my gift would be of great help to you," said the stranger, handing out an empty bag to Bhallav.

"Thank you for the bag," said Bhallav feeling rather funny. "I wish I had something valuable to keep in it."

"My boy, you need not keep anything valuable in it. The bag itself is of great value. Hold it upside down on a vessel and wish for some food and wave it. The

item would continue to pour out of it as long as you hold it like that," said the stranger.

"Good heavens! How did you come across this magic bag?" asked Bhallav.

"Have you ever heard of Seth Sundardas, the merchant?" asked the stranger.

"Who has not heard of him? He was a great philanthrope. He lost everything in business and one day left home. Nobody knows where he is now," replied Bhallav.

"I am Sundardas. I did not lose my property in business. I was deceived by those whom I trusted. That is a different matter. I nurse no grudge towards anybody. Once when I was roaming at Kanya Kumari a hermit saw me. Long ago once when he was sick, I had served him and had cured him. He recognised me. He heard from [redacted] all about my misfortune. By his occult power, he transferred whatever piety I had into this bag," explained Sundardas.

"That means, you get your food from this bag. How can I take it?" protested Bhallav

"My friend, if the cobra would have killed me, of what use would this bag have been to me? I used



to give so much to people who even harmed me. You are the first person who did me good. How can I let you go without any reward?" said Sundardas.

"In that case, sir, come to my house. We will live together. As I told you, I live all alone," proposed Bhallav.

Sundardas had no objection to this. They lived together and were fed by the magic bag. Sundardas warned Bhallav never to demand of the bag more than necessary.

One day, while Sundardas was away in the mountains for his meditation, two travellers asked Bhallav, "Is there any inn where



"we can have food on payment?"

This gave Bhallav a new idea. He took them home and produced food out of the magic bag and fed them. "We had never tasted such delicious food. We will eat here again tomorrow, while returning from the town. Please cook for us," the travellers said, paying for their meals.

Bhallav sold them food again the next day. Thereafter he put a signboard in front of his house, advertising it as an inn. Many people travelled to the town along that road. They were happy to eat there. Bhallav prospered.

At the beginning he felt shy

before Sundardas. By and by he grew accustomed to his new lifestyle. He avoided meeting Sundardas. As he earned more and more money, he even forgot all about Sundardas. He decided to marry. Only then he looked for Sundardas, his benefactor. But Sundardas had left his house. Soon the news reached him that Sundardas was lending his helping hand to anybody who needed some service, but was refusing to take any money for his labour.

Time was passing smoothly, but Bhallav suddenly took ill. No treatment would cure him. His business of course went on all right because he had taught his wife how to produce food from the magic bag. But his own condition deteriorated.

At last his worried wife led him to a hermit who was camping at a nearby place. The hermit cast a look at Bhallav and said, "Your disease is not due to any physical reason. You have violated some sacred rule. What have you done?"

Bhallav told him all about the magic bag. The hermit nodded and said, "I was the person to give the bag to Sundardas. I did nothing except changing Sundardas's own piety, his *punya*, into



certain power. He gave the bag to you out of his gratefulness. Even now he is serving the needy free, in order to atone for the wrong you did by using the power of the magic bag for commerce. But he is sad because of you. That is the cause of your disease."

"What should I do?" asked Bhallav with supplication.

"Stop using the bag for your profit. Earn through your own labour. Apologise to him and

return the bag to him," said the hermit.

Bhallav began looking for Sundardas and located him. Falling at his feet Bhallav wept. Sundardas consoled him saying that sincere prayer could save one from the consequences of all his blunders. Truly, Bhallav recovered. He thereafter depended on his own labour and lived happily. With his magic bag, Sundardas left for the Himalayas.



Many a necklace becomes a noose.

—Paul Eldridge

Blessed is the man who, having nothing to say, abstains from giving wordy evidence of the fact.

—George



THE TREASURE OF LUCK

This happened long ago. There was a flood in the river Huang Ho and many houses were destroyed. The young man Bang and his father also lost their hut. They had to leave the village. Both the father and the son used to earn their living by working in the fields of others as labourers. But since all the people in the village had been reduced to misery, there was no point in their living in the village.

As they were heading towards the city, the father took seriously ill. He died, but not before handing over a bagful of money to Bang. "My son, this is what I have been able to save through years of labour. I had a great desire to buy a piece of land with it. I could not fulfil my dream, but, I hope, you will be luckier," said the dying man.

After his death, Bang settled down in a small hut which he erected on the bank of a river. Soon a piece of land attracted his eyes. It lay barren, though Bang felt that it was quite fertile.

He asked a man in the nearby village about the land's owner. "Well, it belonged to a poor lady who had borrowed some money from the moneylender. She could not pay the money and the land became the moneylender's," informed the man.

"Why is it lying barren?" asked Bang.

"It is because the moneylender is too rich to care for all his property!" replied the man.

Bang met the moneylender and proposed to buy the land. The moneylender quoted a high price. Bang pleaded with him to sell it at a cheaper price, but he would not

agree to it. However, he was willing to let Bang have the land on the condition that Bang would pay him whatever he can now and would pay the rest afterwards.

Bang paid him half of the price of the land. The moneylender wrote out on a scrap of paper that he has sold the land to Bang. But he did not hand over the paper to Bang. "I will give this to you only after you have paid me the full amount," he said.

Bang did not know what a crooked man the moneylender was. He started tilling the land happily.

One morning he was digging a

hole in order to plant a tree when, to his great surprise, he discovered two gold vessels. It so happened that the moneylender was passing by and he saw the vessels.

"Come on, boy, give me my vessels!" he said.

"Sir, the land is now mine. Whatever is in it should be mine!" protested Bang.

"That is out of the question," said the moneylender. "I had buried the vessels here so that they would be safe from the burglars. Today I remembered about them. That is why I came here."

The moneylender snatched the



vessels from Bang and carried them home. It was believed that one found gold vessels only if the God of Luck was pleased with one. The moneylender would be the last person to give up such objects of luck.

Bang went to the court and narrated the incident to the judge. The judge was impressed that he spoke the truth, but since he had no document to prove that the land belonged to him, the judge could not pass any judgement in his favour. He summoned the moneylender. He had received numerous reports about the moneylender's dishonesty and greed.

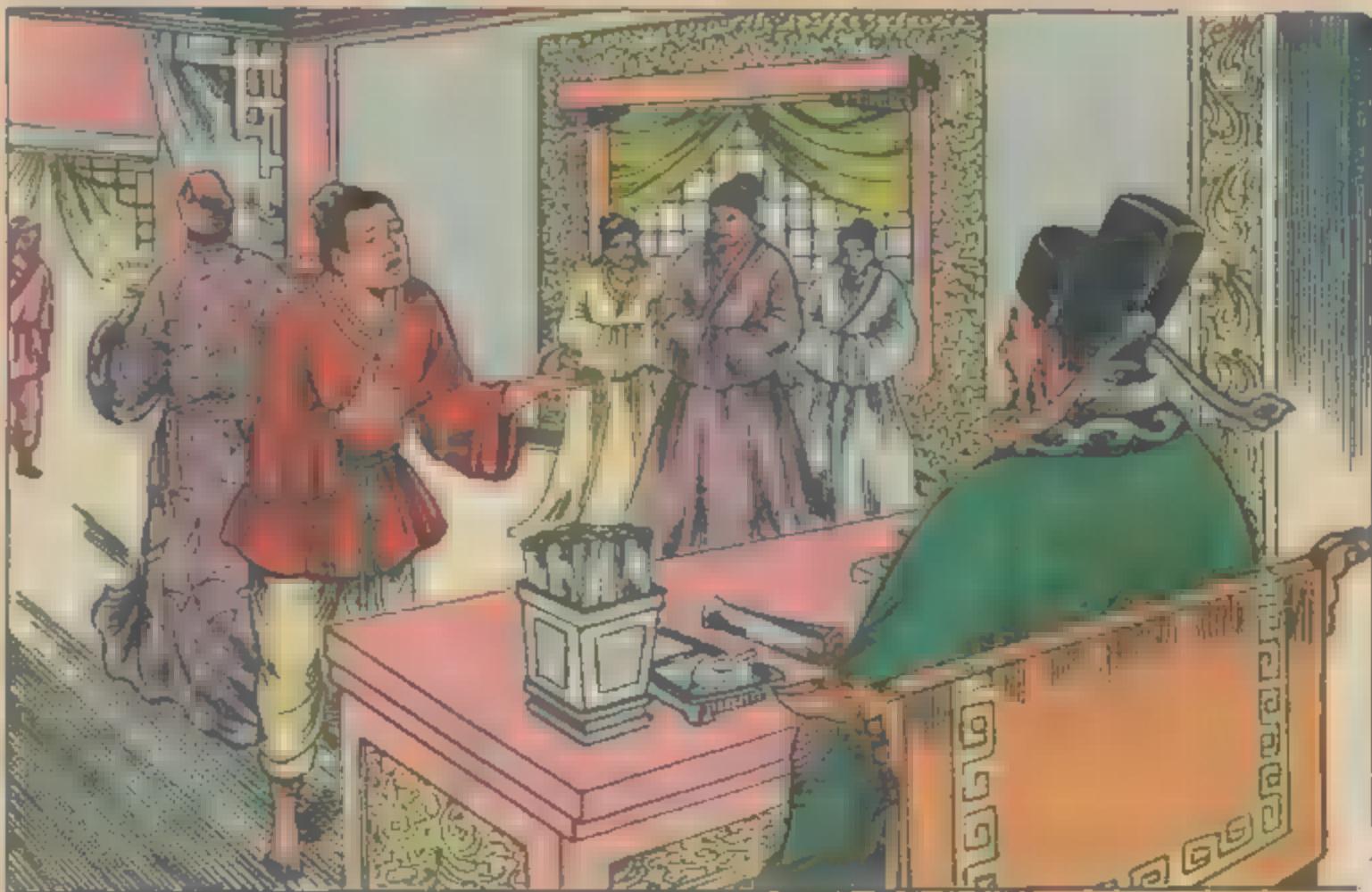
The moneylender claimed that he had never sold the land to Bang. He had only allowed him to till it as a labourer.

"In that case, the vessels are yours," said the judge. The moneylender went away, laughing.

"Sir, does this mean that I have been deprived of even the land?" asked Bang tearfully.

"Don't worry. Go home and wait to see what happens tomorrow!" said the judge with a smile.

Early in the morning the next day the moneylender was arrested. The judge told him, "The vessels your servant found in your field were stolen property.





They were stolen from the king's household. You are either the thief, or the thief's friend!"

"Sir, sir, believe me, sir, I know nothing about the vessels. Bang says that he found them!" babbled the panicky moneylender.

"But he found them on your land! You cannot escape the responsibility. You have to pay for the crime—with your head of course!" observed the judge.

"Sir, sir, believe me, sir, even the land is not mine. I had sold it to Bang. Here is the document!" said the moneylender and he brought out the receipt.

"Hm!" The judge nodded and

said, "So, Bang found the gold vessels on his own land!"

"That is right, sir!" agreed the moneylender.

"So, they should belong to him—like the land!" observed the judge.

"That is right, sir!" said the moneylender, scratching his head which, he hoped, would be safe! He brought out the vessels.

"No. These are not the vessels which the king has lost," said the judge. He then handed over the vessels — well as the document to Bang—and fined the moneylender for his habit of lying.

What is not good for the hive is not good for the bee

—Marcus Aurelius



LET US KNOW

Why did Brutus stab Julius Caesar?

—*Julio Fernandes, Carmona (Goa)*

Rome was a democracy. Caesar, the general of the Roman army, became more and more powerful by his conquests and capability. After an invasion of Britain he was returning to Rome when the Senate (the Roman Parliament), under the initiative of Pompey, asked him to stop beyond the river Rubicon. Had he obeyed the order, he would have shown his respect for the Senate. But he defied the order and crossed the Rubicon. He defeated Pompey and became the dictator. That ended the democracy cherished by the independent-minded citizens. Nobody had the courage or capacity to challenge his authority openly. So, some of them conspired in secret to put an end to him. These conspirators enrolled the support of Brutus who was an aristocrat and a trusted friend of Caesar. Together, they stabbed Caesar to death. Caesar must have been most disappointed to see the dagger in his friend's hand.

Brutus was not personally ambitious. He only loved democracy. Even then, it is a matter of everlasting debate if it was right on his part to be a party to his friend's assassination. Political ideas keep on changing. But friendship and trust are unchangeable ideals.

Unfortunately for Brutus, democracy in Rome did not come back even after Caesar's death. After a brief struggle for power, his nephew Octavian (Augustus) assumed the status of Emperor.

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the *Chandamama*.



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PICKS FROM THE WISE

Envy and fear are the only passions to which no pleasure is attached.

—Collins

There are as many errors of temper as of mind.

—Rochefoucauld

Etiquette means behaving yourself a little better than is absolutely essential.

—Will Cuppy



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